

CALFED Conservation Strategy

Staff Team Meeting Notes

**March 16, 1999
9:00 AM to Noon**

These meeting notes summarize major topics of discussion. The attendance list and a list of upcoming meetings are included at the end of these notes.

1. Call to Order, Introductions, Order of Business

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 AM.

2. Report on 3/12/99 Policy Team Meeting

Term Analyzed in the CALFED Program EIS/EIR. Sandy Guldman reported that the Policy Team confirmed that the term of the CALFED Program, which will be analyzed in the EIS/EIR, will be 30 years.

Geographic Scope of the Conservation Strategy. Water storage sites should be covered in the Conservation Strategy to greatly improve its usefulness. The Policy Team requested that the following process be quickly implemented, with a report on the results presented at the 3/22/99 Policy Team meeting:

- CALFED will generate a map of each water storage site, showing the inundation zone, a one-mile upland area surrounding the inundation zone, and a generous allowance for water handling and conveyance facilities.
- Using the 14 maps, CDFG and USFWS will generate a species list and identify key issues and constraints for each site. NMFS will describe broad constraints on operation to be used in the screening process.
- CALFED will check with JSA to see what information is available for the new species and how the information could be incorporated in the Conservation Strategy.

Groundwater storage sites are very poorly defined, so they will not be included. Mary Scoonover explained that all groundwater storage facilities must have a local sponsor, and no local sponsors have been identified at this time. The geographic area would also not include watershed areas. It is feasible that a supplemental Conservation Strategy or an amendment to the Conservation Strategy will be needed for additional geographic areas, because the programmatic Conservation Strategy can only be used for species which it covers.

Assurances. Draft language on assurances will be discussed at the next Policy Team meeting on 3/22/99. A stakeholders meeting is being planned. Mary Scoonover noted

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that the stakeholders understand that the Conservation Strategy will not authorize take.

Service Area Impacts. The Policy Team determined that an analysis of service area impacts would be required. A position paper on how to address service area impacts, prepared by the USFWS, is under review by the Policy Team and will be discussed at the 3/22/99 meeting.

3. Final Definition of Covered Species and How it Relates to Take Authorization

Chris Beale reported that the draft of Chapter 7, Process for Compliance with ESA, CESA, and NCCPA, which was emailed to the Staff Team, explains that the covered species represent those species that could potentially be granted take authorizations when specific actions and information is developed. The chapter describes three categories: (1) covered species; (2) covered species for which take cannot be authorized at this time (a subset of the first category); and (3) species that are not covered.

Questions were raised about how to deal with a species for which take can be authorized now, but which moves into a "no-take" condition over time. This is a complex problem, but would probably invoke unforeseen circumstances or reinitiation of consultation. This questions is tied up with assurances.

4. Status Report on Review of Administrative Draft Conservation Strategy

Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 were emailed to the Staff Team for review and comments. Chapters 8 and 9 will be distributed by Mike Fris on 3/17/99. Sandy Guldman reminded the Staff Team to submit their comments to the authors by Friday, 3/26/99.

5. Policy Issues Raised by Writing Tasks

Funding: Dana Jacobsen and Chris Beale will provide examples of funding mechanisms to Marti Kie to assist her in drafting Chapter 12, Funding. The Staff Team discussed ways to estimate how much funding would be necessary for implementation of the Conservation Strategy. Categories of funding discussed include: cost for implementing the ERP and recovery plans, administrative activities, and long-term monitoring described in the ERP, CMARP, and EIS/EIR. Mary Scoonover explained that the ERP implementing entity (not yet determined) would direct research and compliance monitoring. A fourth expense category is the implementation of mitigation actions associated with specific actions. This can be deferred, since the entity doing the action will fund the mitigation associated with it.

Tables and Graphics for Chapter 5: Paul Cylinder explained that Chapter 5, Effects of CALFED Actions and Conservation Measures, will consist mostly of tables. Paul outlined the organization for the chapter and said that JSA will be grouping species prescriptions by habitat. Jeff Single requested that for covered habitats, the conservation measures be listed for all species and that species-specific measures be summarized by both habitats and ecozones. Graphics will show:

- (1) the 14 Ecological Management Zones and reservoir sites, called the Focus Area (problem area and solution area) and (2) the Service Area. Graphics will be in black and white to save

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on printing costs.

Habitat Mapping: The Staff team requested that a map of habitats be presented. Paul explained that they have a map of the Delta, based on the Ducks Unlimited GIS. However, outside that area, data are sparse. It will be difficult to generate a habitat map of the entire Focus Area. Several members of the Staff Team said that it is important to provide that information, even if it is less than ideal.

6. Choose Full Name for Conservation Strategy

To differentiate the Conservation Strategy from the Water Use Efficiency Program's water conservation strategy, it was necessary to select a more descriptive name. Multi-species Conservation Strategy was adopted.

7. Action Items

- Dana Jacobsen and Chris Beale will provide information on funding to Marti Kie.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM.

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Attendance at 3/16/99 Staff Team Meeting

Danae Aitchison, AG
 Dawn Andrews, NOAA (phone)
 Chris Beale, CDFG
 Marina Brand, CDFG
 Pat Brantley, CDFG
 Scott Cantrell, CDFG
 Lori Cheung, Toyon
 Paul Cylinder, JSA

Michael Fris, USFWS
 Sandy Guldman, Toyon
 Dana Jacobsen, SOL/DOI
 Marti Kie, CALFED
 Ray McDowell, CALFED
 Mary Scoonover, Cal AG
 Kevin Shaffer, CDFG
 Jeff Single, CDFG (phone)

Upcoming Meetings

The Staff Team will meet:

Tuesday	March 30, 1999	9 AM to Noon	Resources Building Room 804 Call-in Number (916) 657-4113
Tuesday	April 20, 1999	9 AM to Noon	?? ??
Tuesday	May 11, 1999	9 AM to Noon	?? ??
Tuesday	May 25, 1999	9 AM to Noon	??

The Policy Team will meet:

Monday	March 22, 1999	3 - 5 PM	San Rafael
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